

Tourism tops export industries

SECTION B

10^{1*}

THURSDAY
April 13, 2006

BUSINESS

THE SUN
Business Editor
Jim Steinberg
(909) 386-3925
Business Fax
(909) 885-8741
SBSUN.COM

By Jim Steinberg
Business Editor

Tourism is the largest export industry in the combined San Bernardino/Riverside county region, according to a study released Wednesday by the Los Angeles County Economic Development Corp.

The industry employed an average of 97,100 last year, due to the combination of the Coachella Valley and Indian gaming.

The LAEDC, a private non-profit organization, counts as an export industry one that sells a significant share of its goods or services outside the region, bringing money into the local economy.

To reach the high number of tourism-related jobs, the study

allocated portions of the region's travel agents, airport and airline employee base, as well as car rental, restaurant and even printing service employment, said Jack Kyser, the organization's chief economist.

While the bulk of the tourism-related business for the region is in the Coachella Valley, Kyser said the role of the Ontario Convention Center, San Bernardino's Route 66 celebration and the recreational draw of the San Bernardino Mountains can not be minimized.

The No. 2 export industry for the region was wholesale trade and logistics with 45,800 jobs while the third largest was health services/bio-medicine with 36,200 jobs in 2005.

"A lot of people think about a housing industry bubble and what that could mean. But they are going back into the early 1990s ... we are a much more diversified economy now," he said.

Tourism is also the largest export industry in the five-county Los Angeles region, consisting of San Bernardino, Riverside, Los Angeles, Orange and Ventura counties, with a 2005 annual average employment of 512,600 jobs, the study said.

Direct international trade was second with an average of 450,100 jobs, and technology was third with an average of 361,400 jobs in 2005.

Kyser said there was almost a dead heat for fourth place,

ONLINE EXTRA

SBSUN.COM

> Read the complete study.

Kyser said that people come to Loma Linda University Medical Center and the Betty Ford Center in Rancho Mirage from outside the area, bringing family members with them who stay in motels or hotels for extended periods of time.

"This kind of flies under the radar," he said.

Agriculture/food products manufacturing was fourth with 28,100 jobs and technology was fifth with a 2005 average of 22,700 jobs.

In the area as well as across the Southland, Kyser said, "we have a diverse array of activities that goes on here."

with business and professional services recording an average of 251,800 jobs, while motion picture and television production posted an average of 251,600 jobs.

In Los Angeles County, which bucked the trend for the region as a whole, international trade was in first place with a 2005 average of 290,300 jobs, according to the study. It was followed by tourism with 263,500 jobs, motion picture and television production with 241,100 jobs, technology with 207,300 jobs, and business and professional services with an average of 165,100 jobs in 2005, according to the study.

Contact writer Jim Steinberg at (909) 386-3925 or via e-mail at jim.steinberg@sbsun.com.